Public Law 101-185
101st Congress

An Act

Nov. 28, 1989
[S. 978]

To establish the National Museum of the American Indian within the Smithsonian Institution, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

National Museum of the American Indian Act.
Public buildings and grounds.
Historic preservation.
District of Columbia.
New York.
20 USC 80q note.
20 USC 80q.

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "National Museum of the American Indian Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds that—

(1) there is no national museum devoted exclusively to the history and art of cultures indigenous to the Americas;

(2) although the Smithsonian Institution sponsors extensive Native American programs, none of its 19 museums, galleries, and major research facilities is devoted exclusively to Native American history and art;

(3) the Heye Museum in New York, New York, one of the largest Native American collections in the world, has more than 1,000,000 art objects and artifacts and a library of 40,000 volumes relating to the archaeology, ethnology, and history of Native American peoples;

(4) the Heye Museum is housed in facilities with a total area of 90,000 square feet, but requires a minimum of 400,000 square feet for exhibition, storage, and scholarly research;

(5) the bringing together of the Heye Museum collection and the Native American collection of the Smithsonian Institution would—

(6) create a national institution with unrivaled capability for exhibition and research;

(7) give all Americans the opportunity to learn of the cultural legacy, historic grandeur, and contemporary culture of Native Americans;

(C) provide facilities for scholarly meetings and the performing arts;

(D) make available curatorial and other learning opportunities for Indians; and

(E) make possible traveling exhibitions to communities throughout the Nation;

(8) by order of the Surgeon General of the Army, approximately 4,000 Indian human remains from battlefields and burial sites were sent to the Army Medical Museum and were later transferred to the Smithsonian Institution;

(9) through archaeological excavations, individual donations, and museum donations, the Smithsonian Institution has acquired approximately 14,000 additional Indian human remains;

(10) the human remains referred to in paragraphs (6) and (7) have long been a matter of concern for many Indian tribes,